

Culture and Moral Values and Sustainable Development in Bayelsa State: The Role of Social Studies Education

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Abstract

It is a fact that there is growing decadence of culture and moral value in Bayelsa State and the Niger Delta region. There seems to be an increased rate of disregard of indigenous societal norms, ethical values and culture to the embracing of alien culture and moral values. The current system of our education laden with foreign traits is the means through which alien culture and values are inculcated and these are inimical to the indigenous culture and values of Bayelsa People. The neglect of indigenous culture and values, in preference to alien ones, result in vices and problems in the Niger Delta societies such as sea piracy, armed robbery militancy, violent crime, terrorism, homosexuality and many others that hinder developmental strides. It is against this background that this paper considers the use of social studies education as a means by which Bayelsa State and Niger Delta to obtain the much needed culture and values geared towards sustainable development. The paper is an assessment of how social studies can bring back the Izon culture and values as a means of sustainable development. The paper employs secondary sources of data, especially the internet, using a theoretical framework of structural functionalism. To this end, we recommend social studies education for culture values to be part and parcel of our indigenous education curricula to bring about sustainable development.

Keywords: Culture, Society, Moral, Values. Development

INTRODUCTION

Social studies education in most countries is a child of necessity. This may imply that the essence of introducing social studies in most countries curriculum was to heal some social ills towards national development. Ideally, Akubue (2006) marked out the beginning of social studies to Germany. It was introduced as a way of building a new political order and as skill and knowledge for useful citizenship after the Second World War. It was employed to legalise the teaching of Social Sciences particularly Sociology in Britain, while grooming students for their role in the society. In Japan, it was introduced to build a foundation for democratic society while in Canada and the United State of America (USA) it continues its primary function of students grooming for useful and effective citizenship in democratic nation.

Probably, the above rationale is the reason why scholars see social studies as a living subject. According to Nwoji (2006) social studies is a living subject that deals with the matters of the movement as a preparations for now and future. She also added that it is a discipline that deals with social change, better future, and problem-solving. This opinion is buttressed by Ezege, Ikwumely and Okeke (2012:18). They opined that, "the discipline social studies deals with social change and ensures that a meaningful interactions of the recipient with their physical and social environment including the inculcation of sense of social consciousness and social responsibility, inculcates the values of honesty, co-operation and the need of the nation, and the needed skills to found solution to environmental problems (Ezege, Ikwumely and okeke 2012).

METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

In this paper the data for the study is basically selected from secondary materials such as textbook, internet materials, journals articles etc through a systematic qualitative content and descriptive analysis. The emphasis in this paper is on the culture and moral value and sustainable development in Bayelsa State: The role of social studies education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The structural functionalism theory is adopted in this study. The structural functionalist is the oldest in sociological theorizing and in the 19th century, the dominant perspective. It has its roots in the positivist theories of August Comte, Herbert and Emile Durkham. But it developed over the years through the works of functionalist like Malinowski, Rad Clifffe-brown, Tal Cof Parson and Robert Merton (Otite, 1994:14).

Functionalist theorists view society as being made up of interdependent parts called social structure and that each part of the social system exists to serve some function to make the society survive. To them, structure means the composition of something, the elements that make the hole. While function consist of the role played by each component parts in relation to the whole and to maintain the whole as an ongoing concern.

Structural functionalists viewed the society as a system. This is because it comprised of interrelated parts that affects every other areas of the system as a whole. In this way, social institution such as the family, religious, economic, the educational and political systems are analyzed as part of the social system rather than as

isolated unit. With regard to cultural and moral value degeneration, the parts such as the family and the educational system's inability to give orientation of our societal values due to alien cultures and behaviour. Western Civilization and education has reduced sustainably development in our society and this is inimical to our cultures and values.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

The anthropologist, C. Kluckhohn (1962:924) has defined culture as a created design which may be formal, informal, or non-formal, shared by a community of people and handed down from generation to generation, and which serves as a guide to behaviour of men. The importance of this definition is that culture is created by man, and it is not part of natural process. Man is a culture creator, and a culture carrier. Man, originally at birth is a helpless creature, who is gradually made human by a process of acculturation, and he is made further more human still by a process of enculturation. The power of culture is clearly implied in the definition. It is shared by a community of people and it is what makes such a community, and hence, the identity of the group that the educational system is created. It functions to sustain the cultural pattern of a people or a nation, without which the nation or people disappear. The definition says that culture serves as a guide and a way to behaviour of men. We all behave, speak, perceive, think and interact and live within the framework of a particular culture. It is within the cultural context that we make meaning out of existence. It is also within the cultural matrix that we carry out evaluation activities. It is important to note that value orientations are bound up with particular cultural systems without which they are meaningless. It is for this reason that we can talk about democratic culture, policy implementation culture, political culture, economic culture, and academic culture. What all of these cultures are saying is that there is a particular generally accepted way, by a specified group, of carrying out activities involving any of these things, and that this way is learned through the process of socialization. The same is true of sustainable development.

Arisi (2013) sees a personal or cultural value as absolute or relative ethical values, the assumption of which can be the basis for moral actions. A set of measure and consistent values is what is referred to as value system (Arisi. 2013). A principle value is a foundation upon which other values and assessments of integrity are based. Values that are not physiologically established and generally considered objective are considered as subjective (avoidance of physical pain, seeking of pleasure, and so on), differs across individuals and cultures and are in many ways aligned with belief system. Types of value include social values doctrinal ideological values (religious, political) and ethical moral values.

Value can be defined as broad preference pertaining appropriate courses of actions or outcomes. Such values reflect a person's perception or view of right or wrong. Values tend to influence attitudes and behaviour. Values are derived from the cultural system. According to Bock (1969:407). "the value system of a society consists of the explicit and implicit ideals shared by the group together with their relative priorities and integrating pattern". The set of societal values is what we call value orientations. The most important piece for building values is a person family. The family is responsible for teaching children what is right and wrong long before there are other influences. As a child begins school, the school helps to shape the values of children. Religion also plays a role in teaching the right and wrong behaviour to the child. Educationist Dissanayake (1996), stated that cultural and individual values varies according to peoples living standard.

Values and norms are related though they is more universal and complex when compared to norms. Norms are guidelines and rules of behaviour expected from the individual in specific situation, while values have to do with identification of what is good or evil. Putting on of black coloured clothes and appearing solemn are normative behaviour at a funeral. In some cultures, it shows the values of respect and support for the dead as well as solidarity with friends and family. Different cultures reflect different values". According to Santrock (2007), over the last thirty years, traditionally, college students have shown improve interest and importance to personal welfare and decreased interest in the well-being of others. It appears societal values have changed as a result impacting on students beliefs and attitudes. We now can come to the concept of degeneration of values. We must have courage to raise the question: What do we mean by degeneration? From what vantage point is degeneration occurring? How is degeneration associated with developmental values? Degeneration means falling from a particular point in a downward movement to a lower level. This, if occurring, implies that we are at an era when a set of values associated with culture and moral values of our traditional society and norms are falling from a particular actual point to a lower undesirable point. But what is the original point? Is it the point of colonialism and imperialism? This is because we have no will of our own, and are merely reproducing colonial values, or the values of imperialism which we rejected in favour of independent nation. Are we degenerating in terms of communal values which are cooperativeness, sharing, tolerance, appreciation as well as intertribal conflict? The answer is yes because we long rejected communal cultural values as primitive, and accepted the growing capitalist culture with its intense individualism and competitiveness. This rejection is an individual's inability to extract and combine aspects of positive values from the numerous sub-cultures they belong to.

Sustainable development refers to participatory developments, human development and environmental

development. The term sustainable implies long term. The sustainable development guide online (2013) also describe the term as the development that meet the needs of the present without taking away the prospect of the generations to come (Mohammed, 2013). According to Ukaga (2010) there different definition and description of the term sustainability because of diverse viewpoint, experiences and circumstances. It means the definition of sustainability cannot be pinned to only one definition. However, you will find out that while there is a diverse development, policies and practice open for achieving it, there is more agreement on some of our core principles such as meeting basic human necessities fairly and efficient; preserving options for the present and future generations to meet their needs; promotion of community well-being on the basis of general participation and effective citizenship; maintaining the diversity and productivity of nature: managing and utilizing resources with prudence and precaution related to various areas of sustainability (Ukaga, 2012).

Adebayo (2010) also maintained that the concept of sustainable development is the efforts of improving the environment or natural resources for the purpose of improving the quality of life so as not to destroy the needs of the future generation. To this end, sustainable development is the capacity to protect and preserve the resources of the nation for the collective use of citizens with cognisant efforts to preserve the resources for needs of future generations.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION FOR MAINTENANCE OF CULTURE AND MORAL VALUES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN BAYELSA STATE.

Social studies education could be a veritable tool for citizenship training towards sustainable national development. Social studies is significant in national development and meeting the needs and aspirations of any society. Though the relationship between education and sustainable development is difficult and complex, social studies education is the key to a nation's ability to develop and attain sustainable development, especially when aimed towards improving agricultural output, skills for work in new industries, the status of women, promoting environmental protection and inculcating good moral values for sustainable national development.

It was designed for functional citizenship training (Tijani, Abdulgaffar & Musa, 2013). It is expected that social studies inculcate in Nigerian citizens the spirits of patriotism, unity in diversity, respect for Fundamental Human Rights of citizens respect for democratic value, self reliance and other values in Nigeria Society. According to Ikem and Oghenernideihi (2013) social studies education would help give in moral re-armament and rejuvenation of the society where there will be fairness equality, and unity for sustainable national development. In addition, social studies education could enhance citizenship education through inculcation of spirit of patriotism, respect for rule of law, dignity of labour: hard work and dedication to duty as elements of good citizenship for national transformation.

Ahdulhahi (2007:1) opined that, the philosophy of social studies education hinges in part on the idea that Nigerian schools not only train the individual to be just and skilled individuals, but to function as effective members of a free democratic nation. This implies that student and members of society must rely on the knowledge, skills and awareness of the rights of minority and majority groups to co-exist and worship freely: respect for law and order; and respect for public and private properties of Nigerian and non-Nigerian citizens.

Social studies education can help in moulding Nigerian citizens to be creative, productive and responsive to sustainable national development projects or programmes of the society to which they belong. On the other hand, it could prepare future leaders and followers that will have interest of the masses and the nation at heart in their local and global pursuits.

Social studies education could help in instilling democratic values on the citizens. Accordingly, Mike (2011) opines that social studies has the aim of promoting civil competence of the citizens. In corroborating this view, Mbaba & Omabe (2012) offers that social studies is a vehicle through which desired culture, value and norms of the society are being inculcated to its young ones. Hence, social studies as an agent of citizenship training could help in instilling on the youth democratic values like one man one vote, non violation of election rules, recognizing opposition, voting rationally, defending the nation, participating in election: and above all respect to the rule of law and constituted authorities. These when practiced could gear up sustainable national development.

In another vein, social studies education enhances citizens' knowledge of their Fundamental Human Rights and the need to respect the right of others. The study of social studies education enables the citizen to internalize the fundamental human rights and respect same towards a better society. The knowledge of rights, duties and obligations among the students (citizens) may help in producing functional and informed citizens that may contribute to sustainable national development. (Okeke. 2013).

Moreso, Social Studies education helps in social reconstruction of the citizens for sustainable national development. The dynamic nature of social studies lies fundamentally in its utilitarian values of social reconstruction (Tigani, Abdulgaffar & Musa, 2013). Iman - Obong (2009) Social Studies education inculcates good values to the citizens. We wish to emphasis that, one of the most important trends in social studies education is the teaching and learning of values. Patriotism is a basic concept in social studies education and as

well one of the value that Nigerian advocate. Citizens' love for their country is an important part of citizenship training which social studies education transmits on the young ones.

Value restoration and building are basic roles of social studies education. Umar in Okam (2012) recounted the main values to be promoted as follows: honesty, accountability, co-operation, discipline, industry, self confidence, moral courage and respect for the rule of Law and dignity of labour.

On the contrary, Bayelsa State in the Niger Delta today, appears to have values degeneration among citizens. In the same vein, Osakwe (2012) stated that several social vices and malaise that are bane to sustainable development in Nigeria are corruption, armed robbery, indiscipline, dishonesty, and prostitution, child-trafficking and electoral frauds among others. The role of social studies as a means of citizenship training could address the above social malaise when well implemented in the classroom. Currently, social studies education, in our schools' system and society has failed to inculcate right forms of cultural and moral values like tolerance, dignity of one's culture, co-operation, communalism, patriotism, honesty, justice among others on the citizens. Probably, the poor value system of Nigerian citizens and alien Western education system retards Nigeria's sustainable national development.

Deduced from the above analysis, it is lack of national consciousness that manifests in the prevailing attitude of most Nigerian to exploit others for personal aggrandizement (Philip- Ogoh & Okloho, 2013). In summation, Okam (2004), posits that Nigerian society needs massive re-organization, redirection, national rebirth, reconstruction and repositioning through effective socio-culture and moral values through social studies education in all levels of the educational system.

Hence, Delor (2011) argued that education in which social studies is imbedded, need to balance and integrate several tensions: The tension between the spiritual and the material:

Education helps young people act in accordance with their culture and conviction as well as respect for pluralism and concern for others welfare.

THE IMPLICATION OF SOCIAL STUDIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Social studies education can improve sustainable national development. This is probably because if citizens are developed through social studies education, they should contribute to sustainable development in a national. Citizenship training through social studies education could be beneficial in the following way:

1. Citizenship training through social studies education could make Nigeria citizens to imbibe the core values of honesty, justice, accountability, Co-Operation and patriotism. These values when un-adulteratedly kept could lead to sustainable national transformation.
2. It helps in the Development of values needed for Democratic socialism and secularism. A democratic society is bound to play equal treatment to all its members without any discrimination in respect to caste, colour, sex, religion, socio-economic status etc: In this regard. It is quite proper for our country in getting welded with the principle of equity, equality, fraternity, justice for all, socialism, secularism and feelings of peaceful coexistence, love and cooperation. The inculcation of such values among the citizens is however, a very challenging task. The social studies education is very significant in this direction.
3. Social studies education in developing loyalty to the society, nationality and international understanding. Man is said to be a social being by nature. A society however, for its proper functioning needs cooperation among its members. In other words, there lies an utmost need of developing the feelings of loyalty towards one's community and society among its members.
4. Helping in the all Round Development of the personality. A country, society and nation owe their existence to its people. The individuals comprising a society are therefore the real carrier of its progress and prosperity. As a result, it becomes essential to pay proper attention to all round growth and development of a country. The implication of teaching and learning of social studies here can serve the purpose.
5. Citizenship education through social studies provides effective citizenship. It provides citizens who are quite aware and conscious of their rights and privileges as well as their obligations and duties towards the society and the nation in which they live. The implication of social studies education is quite capable and possible of providing the needed education to their younger generation for growing into effective and efficient citizen of a democratic country.

CONCLUSION

This paper is on culture and moral values and sustainable development. Social studies education prepares for effective citizenship through imparting of the right culture and moral values for sustainable development. Social studies is concerned with man's various interaction and interrelationships between man and other men, groups, peers, institutions, and with the physical environment. So in essence, it educates learners about the way of life and living with the requisite values in a society. Education through social studies is conscious of human behaviour, both positive civil and negative anti-social behaviour; and that human relationship is not one type. It is through social studies education that learners learn direct about their varied environments in order to develop

sound knowledge, skills, attitudes and moral values about their environment. The role of social studies in citizenship training cannot be neglected. The reason for this contention is that social studies as an integrated social science discipline, was designed towards citizenship moulding for a better society. It citizens are trained on the values, norms, aspiration and traditions of the society including the understanding of the environment social physical and how they may be manipulated, they are bound to make impact in their lives and the lives of the society members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the finding of this study the following recommendations were made.

1. The need to teach social studies education in all levels of education and make it compulsory for students is very pertinent.
2. Social studies should be taught by qualified teachers at all level of the educational system. When qualified teachers teach social studies at all level of the educational system, citizenship training can be guaranteed and the nation will develop.
3. Students should try and practice the values impacted to them through social studies education to ensure sound citizenship manifestation in the society.
4. To this end we recommend social studies education to be part and parcel of culture and moral values education in Bayelsa, Niger-Delta, Nigeria and Africa in general to bring about sustainable development.
5. There should be mindset-reorientation about the importance of social studies education.

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